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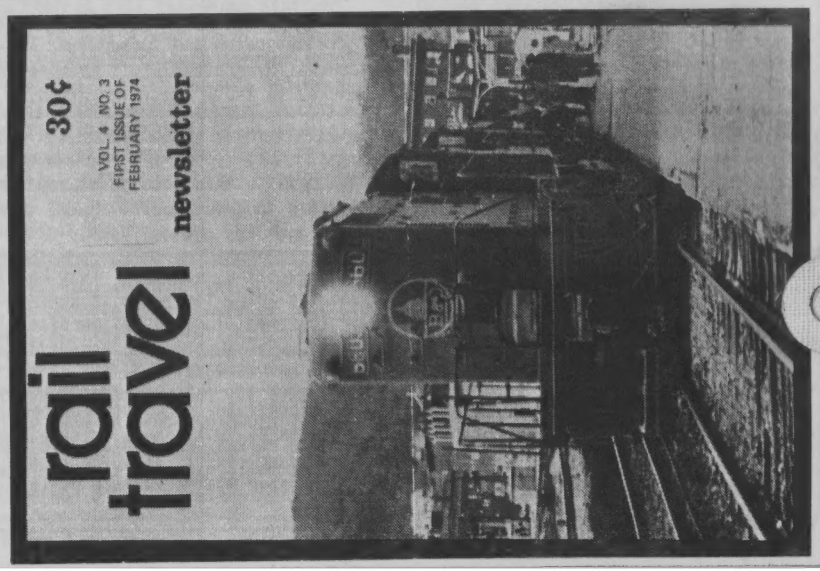

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rail travel newsletter

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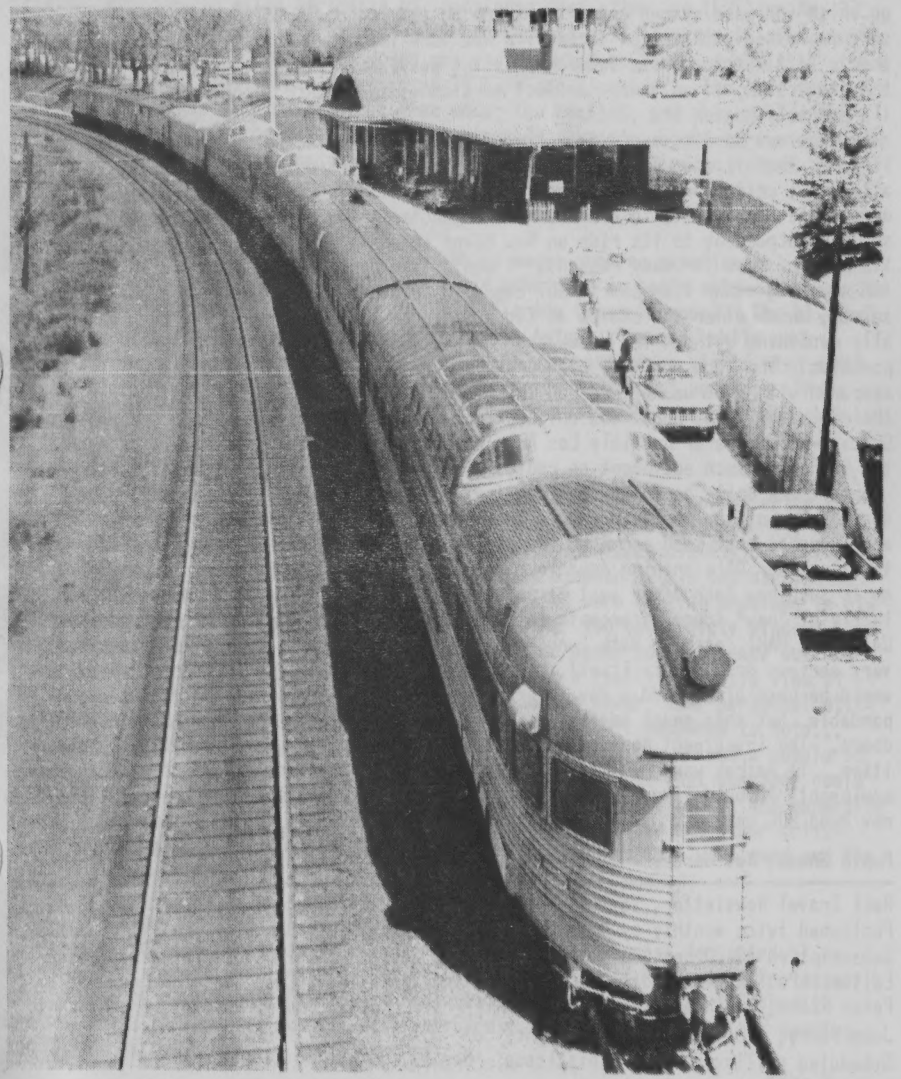
SECOND ISSUE OF
MAY 1974
#84



LETTERS

Your publication is the best thing that ever happened to the publication business. I really enjoy your style. One error in your last issue, though: Paterson, NJ is spelled with one "T," not two.

Thanks for not selling your soul to placate those "holier than thou" (readers) who threaten to cancel subscriptions when you step on their delicate feet by printing stories that curdle their stomachs. Keep up the great work, for there are many of us little people who are behind you 100%.

Robert Scholl

Carlsbad, New Mexico

Coincidentally the Second April issue of RTN inviting comparison comments on the French and UA Turbotrains arrived the day after I arrived back from a trip to Chicago which included my own comparison ride on the French Turboliner. Altho I am not very impressed with the UA turbo, I'm not very impressed with the French version either. If I had to choose between existing equipment, I would begrudgingly opt for the UA version; if an "Americanized" version of the French Turboliner were offered, I'd probably prefer it.

As your own past comments indicated, much of what is wrong with the French Turboliner is that it does not really suit American requirements. It is certainly a more attractive unit than the UA Turbo, much quieter to ride in, and apparently far more dependable (I hesitate to compare ride characteristics because it's unfair to rate anything according to its ride on New Haven tracks). But the Turboliner fails in its present form for many reasons. I don't like permanently faced seats, especially for anything other than short-haul commuter service. I don't like the seats themselves, which offer the choice of two positions--back erect with leg room or partially reclining without leg room--and the seats are not really comfortable in either position. The food service, of course, is the biggest shortcoming, especially when compared with what was offered on the route before, both pre- and post-Amtrak. In their present form, about the only service the units might be suitable on would be Chicago-Milwaukee or possibly Los Angeles-San Diego. I think it significant that the SNCF uses such equipment on routes about half the distance of Chicago-St. Louis.

But if the units could be Americanized, they might have more to offer. Better seating--revolving reclining seats--would be the biggest improvement, along with a more conventional food service. Basically I feel the proven French model has more to offer than UA's ongoing debacle. But I feel obliged to raise one question--why go to such new technology just because it's "new?" We've seen too many examples lately of "new" transit concepts introduced unbelievably full of bugs (Metroliner, UA Turbo, BART, etc.). Both Turbo concepts are, by nature, of limited capacity, a very serious drawback in itself. The French design is a fixed consist, unless it would be possible to add a few internal cars for peak loads; the UA design is expandable, but this means adding another whole train connecting thru the clamshell doors. The investment here again for peak load equipment would probably be prohibitive. If Amtrak wants a fleet of high-speed, bi-directional, self-propelled equipment, I would like to offer a perhaps radical suggestion--buy a large fleet of new Budd RDC units.

G. Gerrish Williams

Maple Shade, New Jersey

Rail Travel Newsletter, Vol. 4, No. 10 (Whole No. 84), Second Issue of May, 1974. Published twice monthly by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. Subscription $7.00 per year; single copy 30¢ (vol. 1-3 25¢). STAFF: James Russell, Editor; Paul Rayton, Editor-at-Large; Kenneth Maylath, East Coast Correspondent; Peter Roehm, Northeastern Correspondent; Peter Putnam Bretz, Roving Correspondent; John Ferry, Midwestern Correspondent.
Scheduled mailing date for this issue: May 29, 1974.

ON THE COVER:

As another in our series of photos depicting the beauties of rail travel, we present this likeness of Rio Grande's RIO GRANDE ZEPHYR, photographed at Glenwood Springs, Colorado by Glenn Lee on May 7, 1974. The consist of eastbound #18, the last remaining segment of the CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR, is: engines 5771, 5762, 5763 (ABB arrangement), 252 heater car (ex-Alco PB), combine 1230, "Silver Pony," "Silver Bronco," "Silver Banquet," and "Silver Sky" observation.

DERAILMENT OF THE SOUTHERN CRESCENT

Non-Amtrak Southern Railway's SOUTHERN CRESCENT, northbound train #2, derailed near Fleming, Alabama, 15 miles northeast of Tuscaloosa just after 1pm (EDT) on May 17. There were 168 passengers and crew aboard, and reports said 133 were injured, mostly with cuts and bruises, except one woman who was reported in serious condition with a broken neck. The consist was reported as 10 cars and 2 engines. The last four cars derailed apparently as dirt slid out from under the roadbed, and they pulled the rest of the train off the track and down a steep embankment. Eight cars ended up on their sides and a ninth tilted at a 45° angle. The train carries an Amtrak thru sleeper off the SUNSET LIMITED from New Orleans to Washington DC.

AUTOTRAK CARS BEING TRIED ON THE FLORIDIAN

Amtrak has announced that early this month is began running experimentally Auto-Trak auto carriers on the FLORIDIAN, the train scheduled to begin auto-ferry service next fall between Indianapolis and Poinciana, Florida (near Orlando). The bi-level carriers being tried out are on an interim basis, Amtrak stressed, while newer equipment is being designed. The cars are covered top and sides with fluted metal and carry an Amtrak logo at either end along with the "AutoTrak" wording. These cars are numbered 9200-up, and carry eight standard automobiles each. Four such cars are to be run on each train.

ICC REGULATOR REPORTS AMTRAK TRIP PROBLEMS

A. Daniel O'Neal, an Interstate Commerce Commissioner who had helped write the legislation creating Amtrak when he was with a Senate subcommittee, recently rode Chicago-Seattle on Amtrak's EMPIRE BUILDER and set down his complaints in a 32-page memorandum to Amtrak president Roger Lewis, reports Stephen Aug in the Washington Star-News (May 16). Among the problems he encountered were heating problems in his sleeper--one side of the car was overheated, the other too cold; dirty windows that were never cleaned ("With effort, though, the Glacier peaks could be made out and there was evidence that somewhere out there there was a really fantastic view of the mountains."); rundown locomotives that were lacking power; poor personnel utilization (there was no coffee available the first day out--"I happened to note... that there were three cooks, four waiters and busboys, a maitre d' and a couple of Amtrak reps sitting in the dining car. One would have thought that somebody could have made some coffee."); inoperative electric outlets in his sleeper; and generally shabby equipment, even the refurbished cars. In spite of these and other criticisms, O'Neal said he enjoyed his trip, that the service and food were good and the train running on time.

THREE MORE NIXON NOMINEES TO AMTRAK BOARD ARE NAMED

The remaining 3 of 9 names sent by the White House to Congress for approval as Amtrak board members were released May 16. They are: Donald P. Jacobs, Professor of Finance and department chairman at Northwestern University; Robert Galbraith Dunlop, board chairman of Sun Oil Co.; and Gerald D. Morgan, partner in a Washington DC law firm.

COACH SEAT RESERVATIONS NOW REQUIRED ON AMTRAK TRAINS

Effective May 19, Amtrak is requiring reservations for coach seats on all its long-distance trains. Amtrak said this change was necessitated by "substantial increases in train ridership which resulted in overcrowding and standing room only on many trains during peak travel periods." The following trains acquire all-reserved status: SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR, EMPIRE BUILDER, NORTH COAST HIAWATHA, LONE STAR, INTER-AMERICAN, NATIONAL LIMITED, JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, PANAMA LIMITED, MONTREALER, and NIGHT OWL. Trains already having this requirement were: all Florida trains, SUNSET LIMITED, SOUTHWEST LIMITED, BROADWAY LIMITED, and COAST STARLIGHT.

AMTRAK WANTS 14 TURBOLINERS FOR NEW YORK-BOSTON ROUTE

Amtrak is seeking DOT approval of the purchase of 14 new French-type Turboliners to be built by Rohr Corporation of California, for operation on the New York-Boston Northeast Corridor segment. These are part of an order of 20, two of which are already running Chicago-St. Louis. The remaining 4 would be placed in Midwestern service. Amtrak apparently already has approval to buy the 4 Midwestern trains as well as the 2 shipped from France, but is holding up its order pending DOT approval of the Northeastern plan. According to Amtrak management, the Turboliners would achieve 40-60 minute faster running times than new conventional diesels NY-Boston, and would command a 50% fare premium. However, it has been learned that Amtrak's own internal studies do not bear up these claims--that Turbos would be only 10-15 minutes faster on the Northeastern route. Amtrak's own studies, evidently suppressed by management, are said to conclude that Turbos would be less desirable investments than new conventional equipment on the route. The route is expected to be completely electrified in 6-7 years. Amtrak is said to have received approval for over $100 million of new equipment, including conventional equipment, but has not placed orders, apparently pending outcome of the DOT's decision on the order to Rohr for 14 trains.

In other news, Amtrak tested some new Metroliner cars on a 21-mile stretch of rail between Trenton and New Brunswick, running at speeds up to 150 mph. The purpose of the test was to check out performance of new cars having electrical equipment on the car roofs rather than below the cars.

FORTUNE MAGAZINE ARTICLE CALLS FOR REPLACEMENT OF AMTRAK MANAGEMENT

The outspoken assessment of Amtrak appearing in the May issue of Fortune Magazine, mentioned here last issue, has now made its way across the nation. The article, written by Rush Loving, Jr., (see our editorial, p. 14) basically states that Amtrak has been badly managed, and that in order to keep from "blowing" its golden opportunity provided bythe energy shortage, Amtrak must replace its top management, starting with president Roger Lewis. This summer will be "a disaster," the article predicted, since ridership may leap as much as 60% above last year, and equipment shortages will be severe. It laments the "death" of the SUPER CHIEF and recounts other Amtrak blunders, concluding that American taxpayers "deserve more than trampled expectations." Says Fortune, concerning the DOT-Congress split over how large Amtrak should become: "No company can operate successfully with equally powerful, diametrically opposed interests meddling in its decisions."

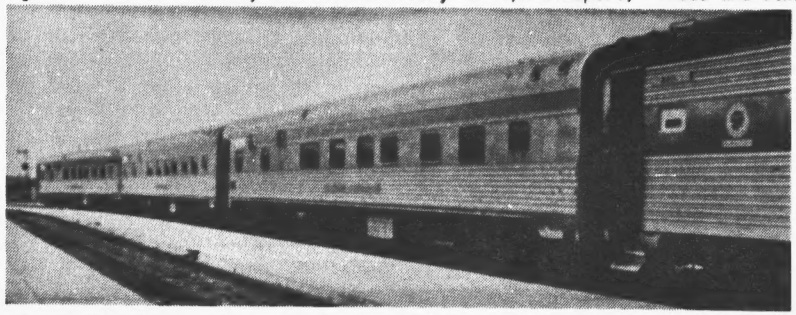
THE SAFEST TRACK IN THE UNITED STATES

What railroads have the safest tracks in the nation, as judged by accidents per million locomotive miles in 1972? The top three, from data submitted by National Association of RR Passengers to a House subcommittee May 17, are UP, SP and Santa Fe, with .4, .7 and .9 accidents respectively. On the bottom of the list are Rock Island (14.4), MKT (14.2), and KCS (12.5). NARP appeared before the subcommittee to support the amendments to the Rail Safety Act of 1970.

AMTRAK'S NEW EXPERIMENTAL ROUTE: This was to be announced by the DOT early in May, but is not yet known. The DOT Secretary is replying to requests for such service with the information that the equipment shortage--a shortage partly of its own making--makes route evaluation difficult, to be done carefully.

canadian news letter

CANADIAN PACIFIC CARS acquired by Amtrak have been mentioned in these pages before. The photo below, taken by Jeff Mora in the Washington Union Terminal coach yard on April 30, shows the first 3 sleepers to appear in the States: (l. to r.) "Chateau Argenson," "Chateau Lauson," and "Chateau Richelieu." These are all 8 duplex roomette, 4 section, 3 bedroom, 1 drawing room cars, built by Budd in 1955. (At the far right is Southern Railway's "Rivanna River," a 10/6 sleeper.) These and other



CP Rail cars have been used in service on East Coast trains such as the MONTREALER and SILVER STAR. In the picture they are still in CP paint, but reader Walter Smith informs us that at least some such cars have had the CP name and logo painted out, while the nameplate remained. He reports that the WASHINGTONIAN on May 18 carried 3 such cars in service: "Chateau Papineau," "Chateau Dollard," and "Chateau Rigaud."

CANADIAN NATIONAL APPARENTLY is warming somewhat to Amtrak. Connecting schedules for the PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL at Vancouver and the MONTREALER at Montreal are listed in the summer CN passenger timetables. Also in the works is a joint Amtrak-CN ticketing arrangement. Presently, CN will not sell interline tickets to the U.S., and Canadian travel agencies carrying Amtrak ticket stock, such as Skyline in Vancouver, are reportedly doing quite well.

CP RAIL WILL again break the connection between its eastbound CANADIAN and the ATLANTIC LIMITED at Montreal for the summer season. Effective June 23-September 1, ATLANTIC LIMITED No. 42 becomes No. 40 and operates 1 hr 45 min earlier east from Montreal. The connection is resumed Sept. 2 at the conclusion of the summer travel rush!

CN TRAIN 10, the eastbound "Rupert Rocket," will operate 90 minutes later east from Prince Rupert during the summer season June 24-Sept. 10, and will arrive Jasper at 8:45am rather than 7am during that time. Each of the 3 RDC runs leaving Edmonton in the evening will depart 10 min later on the summer CN schedule.

CN WILL OPERATE the CHALEUR as a separate train on the Gaspe-Montreal run once again this summer, departing Montreal as an independent run June 21-Sept. 5. During off-peak times, the CHALEUR has been combined with the SCOTIAN and OCEAN LIMITED runs Montreal-Matapedia, Quebec.

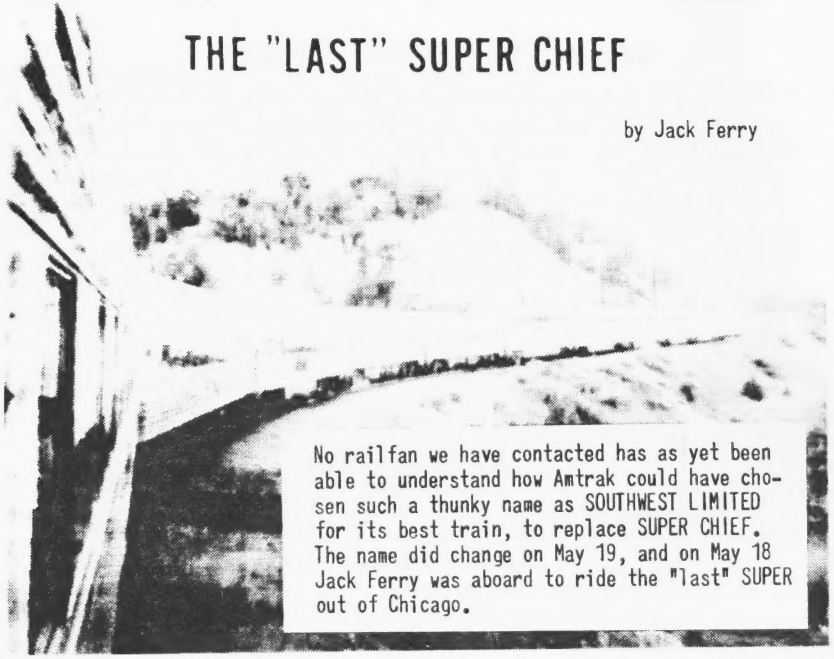
ROYAL HUDSON STEAM engine tours North Vancouver-Squamish on the British Columbia Rwy are expected to begin June 21 and run daily except Mon & Tues thru Labour Day. Many lightweight CP-built coaches of the 2200-series have been assembled for this service, most of them in the old CP wine red colour scheme.

THE TRANSIT EQUIPMENT section of the Ontario provincial government is ready to begin construction of 200 new streetcars for Toronto, once details are worked out between the Province and TTC. The new electric cars, to feature many of the latest technological advances on electric equipment, will cost $200-250,000 each, and will replace about 200 ex-U.S. PCC streetcars now about 25-30 years old. About 20 new cars will be delivered in 1977; 80 in 1978; and the remaining 100 in 1978. The U.S. cars are from Cleveland, Birmingham, Cincinnati, Kansas City and Louisville.

(continued on page 16)

THE "LAST" SUPER CHIEF

by Jack Ferry



The SUPER CHIEF in scenic New Mexico. Photo: G.Hyko.

No railfan we have contacted has as yet been able to understand how Amtrak could have chosen such a thunky name as SOUTHWEST LIMITED for its best train, to replace SUPER CHIEF. The name did change on May 19, and on May 18 Jack Ferry was aboard to ride the "last" SUPER out of Chicago.

At 5:35pm the train backs into Union Station and the crowd begins to gather. As usual, the train is spotless, and at 6pm, as we move down the ramps, it looks longer than usual. In addition to the two locomotives, baggage, baggage-dormitory, four hi-level coaches, diner and lounge, four sleepers, diner and dome lounge, were a deadhead "Regal" series sleeper and a lunch counter diner on the headend.

There was no fanfare or ceremony as we glided out promptly at 6:30, only a handful of railfans getting their last few shots. I was heading for Kansas City and was fortunate enough to have a bedroom. The car "Regal Dome," altho unrefurbished, was immaculate inside and rode quite well.

As I made my way to the first class dome lounge, we seemed to be poking along. By the time we arrived at Joliet we were nearly 30 minutes late. Following our departure it was dinner time. I was indeed surprised to learn from the stewart that the diner was full and there were several people ahead of me waiting to be served. After a short wait in the lounge, we were seated. The menu was, as expected, the large SUPER CHIEF menu. The stewart, Dino A. Zarlengo, passed out complimentary Santa Fe SUPER CHIEF buttons to all patrons of the dining car. He was indeed cordial and friendly with all the passengers, but seemed quite bitter about the events taking place.

My selection, breast of chicken, was served in the true Santa Fe tradition. Everything from the soup to the dessert and complimentary champagne was as good as most of the best restaurants in the country.

We remained about 30 minutes late as I returned to the dome lounge. It was quiet and peaceful, and I thought of my first ride on the SUPER CHIEF around 1967, and sitting in the dome as we passed thru a tremendous thunderstorm. The bolts of lightning had kept the sky bright nearly all the way to Kansas City.

At Galesburg the conductor appears to be quite concerned. It seems the heavy Midwest storms of the past few days were really taking effect. There had been a washout about 60 miles north of Kansas City. A detour move of some type would be likely. We departed Galesburg at 10:10pm, heading towards Fort Madison, and about four miles out of Galesburg came to a complete stop. Here we sat and waited.

At 12:30am I made my way thru the train to the conductor's office in the lower section of the first coach. He explained the situation and said no one knew what to do. The TEXAS CHIEF (also about to change its name) was at Fort Madison also, unable to move. The Santa Fe main line was completely blocked and Amtrak was trying to arrange movement over the BN via Quincy and into Kansas City. Finally it was learned that the BN too was washed out. The Rock Island was also out of the question, since they had already been detouring over Santa Fe.

The message was then relayed to the conductor that we would detour over the BN to Louisiana, Missouri and the GM&O to Kansas City. Everything seemed to be okay until the ICG (GM&O) asked what type of power we had. It was learned that the line, served almost exclusively by F units, could not take the heavy Amtrak locomotives because of track curvature in certain areas and one bridge which they couldn't clear. Santa Fe offered to substitute smaller freight power until it was realized that the train would have no steam and thus no air conditioning, and Santa Fe rescinded the offer. Another plan of detouring over the BN to Denver and Santa Fe to La Junta was also dismissed.

At 1:30am no decision had yet been made. The 12-hour law would catch the crew at 2am out in the middle of nowhere if something wasn't done quickly. Finally, the dispatcher gave the order to back the SUPER CHIEF to the depot at Galesburg. Here the crew would be relieved, and since no other trains were operating, the dispatcher would protect the train.

Since it was now past 2am and my weekend nearly gone, I arranged with the conductor to detrain at Galesburg. Here I would have a much better chance to get back to Chicago later in the day. When I left the train there was still a definite possibility that the last SUPER CHIEF would be annulled and would never made it to Los Angeles.

The SUPER CHIEF continued to sit in Galesburg thru the night, and finally at 6am with a new crew the detour began over the BN to Lincoln, Nebraska and the UP to

Topeka, Kansas via Marysville, Kansas. The TEXAS CHIEF, which likewise spent the night at Fort Madison, made its way up to Burlington, Iowa and onto the BN. It was decided that trains 4 and 16, held at Kansas City, would make the reverse movement. As the train left Galesburg it was already 8 hours late. It reminded me of another train back in December of 1967 which experienced a great deal of difficulty completing its last run--the 20th CENTURY LIMITED.

The first SOUTHWEST LIMITED and LONE STAR due out of Chicago on Sunday, May 19, were detoured over the former GM&O to Granite City, Illinois and the TRRA via Municipal Bridge into St. Louis and the Missouri Pacific to Kansas City. This detour was to remain in effect for several days.

THE CITY OF Seattle is looking at the possibility of bringing back the cable cars that once connected the waterfront with First Hill over the steep downtown hills. The Seattle Times has editorialized in favor of the plan..... AS PROMISED GRUDGINGLY in its big newspaper ads of May 7, the Southern Pacific ran an ad for its Peninsula commute service on May 13, as directed by the Public Utilities Commission. The ad, first in memory, shows a cartoon of a smiling rail commuter relaxing before a huge train window thru which he views loops of jammed freeways. Quote: "It would be a bargain even if it cost twice as much"--which is just what SP wants: twice as much revenue..... THE OPENING OF National Transportation Week was heralded in New York on May 13 with the first runs of new DOT "State of the Art" subway cars--two of them which will run in NY thru May, when they are sent to Cleveland, Boston, Chicago and Philadelphia for similar testing.....

EXPO '74

THE FIRST RUNS OF AMTRAK'S NEW TRAIN TO SERVE THE EXPOSITION IN SPOKANE

by Glenn Lee and James Russell

The inaugural run of Amtrak's EXPO 74 from Seattle to Spokane, Washington on May 19 was delayed nearly two and one-half hours by a freight derailment north of the King Street Station in Seattle. The derailment of a loaded log car near the north portal of the Seattle Tunnel in addition prevented motive power from reaching the EMPIRE BUILDER from Burlington Northern's interbay engine terminal, and the BUILDER was delayed an hour and a half on its new 1:15pm departure.

The freight wreck was caused by a flat car with a heavy load of logs on a BN train buckling under the load, preventing the railroad from bringing in the two Amtrak locomotives to get the new service running.

EXPO 74 had created somewhat of a media stir, and two Seattle television stations were on hand to record acting Seattle Mayor Sam Smith, new Amtrak consumer representative nominee Prof. Edward Ullman and others get the new train out properly. When it became apparent that the 12:30pm departure could not be met, Cere Berlin and Councilman Sam Smith went to the forward end of the first car of the unpowered train and broke the customary bottle of champagne. Amtrak then entertained newsmen in the combination dining-lounge car of the consist, and there was a 2-hour wait until the damage could be cleaned up and rails repaired.

The eastbound EXPO 74, train 792, was a beautiful assemblage of Amtrak equipment. There were seven cars, all in Amtrak colors and all carrying fluted stainless steel. When it departed at 2:53pm, the consist was: F unit locos 102 and 152; Amtrak coaches 5230 and 5227; Amtrak dome coach 9560; Amtrak lunch counter diner 8101; and Amtrak coaches 5234, 5225, and 5226. The reserved seat coaches were lined from 7920-7925. No baggage car was operated.

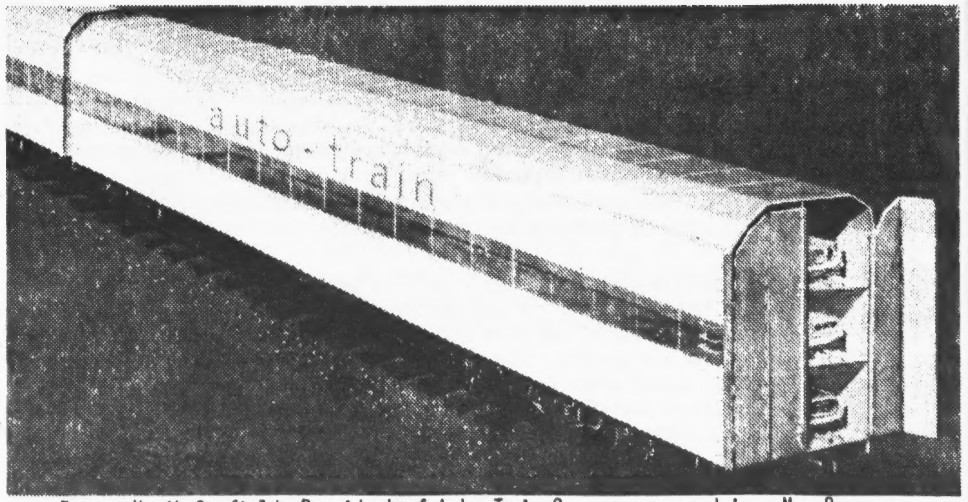
The first westbound EXPO was considerably less elegant. It arrived in Seattle 20 minutes late, showing at King St. Station at 4:50pm with F units 107 and 153 pulling Amtrak cars 7532-7533; 7506 (ex-Shasta Daylight); 8351 "Travellers Rest" car in NP colors; Burlington "Silver Bluff" dome coach; and 7526-7527. Apparently the first westbound run was held east of Everett to allow the eastbound service to clear the Everett station without delay.

Visiting California Amtrak buffs declared that the first EXPO press run looked very much like the first SAN JOAQUIN runs (see RTN, 1st March issue), and predicted that both runs will soon resemble the first westbound consist as the "good" cars are moved elsewhere for summer service or Amtrak's next "first run." Both runs were moderately filled, but traffic is expected to increase rapidly when schools close. Suspicions were confirmed two days later, when train 792's consist was units 100 & 154; 7523-7524, 8101, 9560, four cars total. The 5200-series cars returned to Seattle the 20th and by the 21st were buried deep in the coach yard, perhaps to go onto the STARLIGHT.

Amtrak's advertising agency prepared an ad for the EXPO 74 which runs in newspapers and appears in the May 19 timetables: a drawing of a child staring out a (train) window at snow-covered peaks. The ad reads: "This year, while your kids are still kids, Amtrak to Spokane for Expo '74. And visit Yellowstone or Glacier Park on the way."

Without giving specifics about service, it goes on to say: "If you've always wanted to take in a World's Fair as a family, this is the year to do it. Expo '74 at Spokane is the only World's Fair to be held in this country till the nineteen eighties." The ad warns that "If possible plan your trip before July or after mid-September when train space is easier to get. And reserve early..."

AUTO-TRAIN CORPORATION DEVELOPING NEW TYPE AUTO-CARRIERS



Eugene Kerik Garfield, President of Auto-Train Corp., announced in a May 8 press release that his company has initiated a program for the development of a new fully enclosed tri-level auto-carrier. A prototype of the tri-level carrier is being built by Southern Iron & Equipment Co. and Evans Products Co., which will carry 12 autos, and is scheduled for delivery this summer. Garfield said, "Upon completion of tests, tri-level, fully enclosed carriers will be ordered. These carriers will certainly increase our capacity to transport automobiles to meet the growing demand for Auto-Train service." It is expected that they will be received in time to be placed in service early next year. The automobile capacity on the trains equipped with new carriers will increase from 160 to 180. Garfield stated, "The new tri-level carriers will be constructed with the same high standards we now have on the bi-level carriers, including the unique passenger suspension system." (Auto-Train photo.)

NARP CHARGES THAT AMERICAN TRACK IS GOING TO POT

The Federal Government wouldn't permit an airline to defer maintenance on its fleet of passenger and cargo planes, but it is looking away while the nation's railroads defer maintenance on track and roadbed. That charge was made late this month by Anthony Haswell, chairman of the National Association of Railroad Passengers, in testimony before the House of Representatives Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce.

According to Fedral Railroad Administration records for 1973, track-related accidents rose 38% over the 1972 rate. There were 29 persons killed and 342 injured in derailments during the first 10 months. Preliminary data for the rest of the year and the first 2 months of 1974 indicate that derailments are increasing. There were 64 passengers injured in the first two months of 1974, compared with only one in the same period in 1973. The primary cause of derailments is defects in or improper maintenance of tracks and roadbed.

"The ultimate question that must be decided by the Congress is whether the U.S. should have safe and adequate railroads, or only the kind the railroad companies choose to provide," Mr. Haswell declared. He said America has "the worst railroad lines of any advanced industrial nation." He asserted that action must be taken by the Federal Government to remedy the situation. Part of the problem, he explained, is the poor financial condition of some roads, and part a result of excessive dividend payments and diversification into other businesses. "Congress will be doing a real service if it can persuade the diversifiers to get out of the railroad business and apply their financial talents in areas where there will be less adverse impact on the public," he said.

DOT: CUT BACK TRAINS

REMARKS OF SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION CLAUDE S. BRINEGAR
AT NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON, WASHINGTON DC, MAY 14

(In the following question-answer format, Secretary Brinegar is actually asking himself the questions that he then answers.)

Q. While we're on railroad issues, do you have any comments about Amtrak? It--and its management--seem to be coming under increasing criticism. Do you think this is warranted?

A. This is a complicated subject, and I won't attempt a detailed answer today. But let me make a few points: Amtrak was devised in 1970 as a way to salvage intercity rail passenger service after it had been battered by ICC regulations and out-competed by the automobile and air service. Since Amtrak was conceived of as a for-profit operation--in fact, its common stock is owned by three railroads--this implies to me that it was intended that it provide this service in markets where it makes reasonable economic sense. But Congress has--and is--pushing Amtrak in other directions, mostly political. We are now prohibited by statute from changing the present route structure--even tho some of the long-haul routes have very little ridership--and we are even required to add a new "experimental" route this year and next. Amtrak's executive salaries are limited by statute to levels significantly lower than industry standards, thus limiting our abilities to recruit, and the Board of Directors now has to have a specified political balance.

When it started up a little over 3 years ago, Amtrak inherited some 2000 largely worn-out passenger cars and, even today, it has to rely on the railroads to both operate its trains and to repair and maintain its equipment. And, of course, last winter's gasoline shortage suddenly threw Amtrak a great surge of business it was ill-prepared to handle.

Needless to say, these events have not been conducive to peace and harmony. They are also producing a very serious cash loss--a loss that is being financed, I suspect unknowingly, by the general taxpayer. Despite a 30% increase in this year's ridership, Amtrak's revenues of about $240 million will be offset by expenses of nearly $400 million, for an operating loss of about $160 million. In addition, by the end of this fiscal year, the Federal government will have guaranteed nearly $500 million in Amtrak loans to purchase new equipment. I find it difficult to foresee the conditions under which Amtrak will be able to repay these loans.

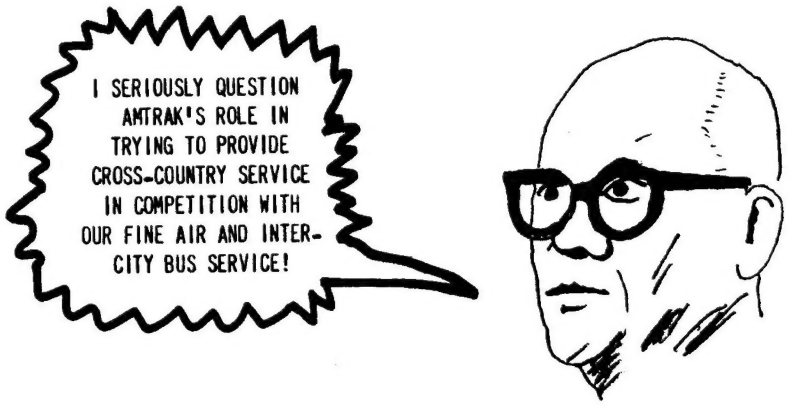
Amtrak's management can reasonably be criticized on a number of grounds, and I have my own list, but to me most of the gripes that I hear are the result of events largely beyond their control. In particular, I think some of the recent efforts to place the blame upon Amtrak's President, Roger Lewis, are off-base. He's working hard to make the most of a difficult situation.

Amtrak clearly has a valid role in moving passengers in our densely populated corridors--such as the Washington to New York to Boston area, and possibly a few others. I would encourage the development of good, high-speed equipment and good roadbeds to provide this service. Such steps will enable us to unload some of our over-burdened highways and airways to the advantage of all. But I seriously question Amtrak's role in trying to provide cross-country service in competition with our fine air and intercity bus service. The economics are simply wrong. Amtrak should specialize in what it's good at, and stop trying to do too much. I'm not saying it should be forced to operate at a profit, which may well be hopeless, at least in a traditional business sense. But certainly we ought to be able to agree on the tolerable level of taxpayer support, and then work to maximize service within that limit. I very much hope we will be able to refocus Amtrak's direction along these lines before the whole thing becomes hopelessly politicized.

Q. Let's talk about urban transportation for a moment. What with the energy shortage and all, isn't it about time to mount a massive Federal program to help our cities solve their public transportation problems?

A. Let me offer two thoughts on this most important question:

1. Yes, I agree that our major cities need additional help in financing public transportation. Last January the President proposed an innovative $16 billion, 6-year program that we think properly meets these needs. This proposal is embodied in the Unified Transportation Assistance Program (UTAP), which is now before the House Public Works Committee. I should note that there have been some worrisome reports to the effect that the Committee is considering a "major increase", like a doubling or more, in the level of funding. I certainly hope this is not so. While the large cities need help, there certainly has to be a limit to the burdens placed on the nation's taxpayers for such projects. Significant increases over the funding levels proposed by the President would be inflationary, they would force the movement of funds out of



one Federal program into a program such as this, and I fear they would be an invitation for some cities to undertake expensive but inappropriate long-term construction projects simply because the Federal funding is available. Today's New York Times, which suggests that a program on the order of $24 billion is being considered and is acceptable to the administration is wrong--it is not acceptable.

2. The second thought has to do with the energy shortage and energy conservation. Without question our nation will be short of energy--especially liquid petroleum, the prime mover of our transportation system--for as far ahead as we can see. Petroleum growth trends of the past decade cannot be sustained for another decade without America becoming hopelessly dependent upon Arab oil resources. The only way to cut this rate of growth over this crucial decade, the one right in front of us, is to use the transportation facilities we have, or will have, prudently and intensively. Detroit must, of course, shift its focus from the overweight, inefficient auto to small, efficient ones--which they are now doing at top speed. But it also means that we must bring about increased usage of existing mass transit systems, most of which are being used far below effective capacity, and we must quickly add to the bus systems in all our cities. Further, in order to discourage needless private driving, we must see large increases in car pooling, work-hour staggering, and other approaches to efficient traffic management. Our Department has a number of programs under way directed to such priority needs. These approaches, coupled with our hoped-for successes in finding new oil sources in the North American Continent and the development of domestic synthetic fuels industries, offer the best hope for gaining independence from future foreign oil blackmail.

(The following questions were posed by members of the audience.)

Q. What is the true story of your plan to resign?

A. I have no plans to resign.

Q. There are quite a number of questions, of course, about Amtrak. Here's one for a starter. In your remarks you say Amtrak should concentrate on corridors. With hundreds of thousands of people wanting to ride long distance trains, do you actually want them discontinued? What chance do you think you would have with such a program which is so manifestly unpopular with the public and with Congress, which insists on adding new Amtrak routes every year?

A. I believe Amtrak, if we get at the facts, will be found to be doing well in providing needed service on some routes and on other routes losing a great deal of the taxpayer's money. What I would like to have happen and I ask this group to consider it, is enough public discussion of what in fact is being done to Amtrak. Certainly I could not go up to Congress and say, "I have a great idea--let's cut Amtrak in half," and succeed very much. But I am quite worried about the direction. You look at the dollar numbers and some of the long routes are not being ridden very much. They are tying up equipment and they are losing a lot of money. I think it's a matter of what is right and what is an appropriate role of Amtrak in our national transportation system. So that's my message. Whether that happens or not, I don't know.

Q. Concerning Amtrak subsidies, aren't these relatively small when compared to what taxpayers pay to subsidize airline passengers at about $20 per airline passenger?

A. Well, if they are subsidizing airline passengers that much, it's in somebody else's budget. I know of no such program of that magnitude. There's a regional subsidy program of 60 some odd million dollars, but the rest of it is pretty self-supporting. Now, it may come to that with Pan Am and TWA, which I hope to God not, but Amtrak's losses this year of over $160 million are--I'm concerned are on the way up. So this could be the start of something big. I think the time to address it is now.

Q. Well, one other point on subsidies. Someone sends up this: Today's Wall Street Journal says the Penn Central's subsidy from taxpayers will exceed $1 billion. Is that article correct? Will it cost more or less?

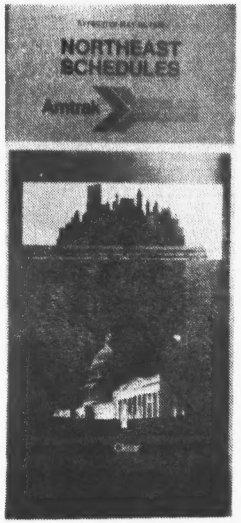
A. It will cost a great deal. And whether or not it's all taxpayer, basically gifts, we do not know, of course. We are in the process of trying to redesign the system thru the body of the USRA. We have started with engineering studies. I spent a day with Penn Central people recently. It's going to cost a great deal. It's quite possible, of course, if we can restructure and redo the freight rates, that this new corporation will have some borrowing ability. What lies ahead and who finances it I don't know. The important point is that we do keep and maintain a private sector rail freight service. You cannot nationalize a part of the nation's freight system. It just simply won't work. You try to nationalize or make this a permanent sick Federal baby in the Northeast, pretty soon we have done in the competitors--the Norfolk and the Chessie and the other good railroads that are doing it without taxpayers' money. We have killed the trucking system. We simply cannot nationalize a part of it. So the urgent thing is to find a way to build a good private sector rail system. I don't think it'll take a billion dollars of the taxpayer's money, but it's gonna take quite a bit.

Q. What are the evils of rail nationalization of which you speak?

A. The evils are that our rail system in this country of 200,000 miles is a freight system basically. Amtrak is essentially nationalized--the passenger side--and can be run over the railroads without affecting the freight very much. The rail freight system hauls about 30% of the ton-miles of this country. To attempt to run that rail freight system thru a Federal corporation or what have you in competition with the trucks, the barges, the pipelines, the other competitors, is to me a terrifying thought. I've visited Japan, I've visited European countries and others where they're mostly nationalized. The Japanese railway, which has total trackage say about

the size of a little more than Penn Central, has 450,000 employees! That's more than twice, I think, what the American whole rail system... uhh, you know, forget the numbers... but nationalization, as is happening in Amtrak, drives us away from economic efficiency. Our country, its standard of living, its role in the world trade, all hinges on American competitiveness. We nationalize rail freight, I think we'll have done ourselves needlessly great damage in our private enterprise system.

AMTRAK'S MAY 19 SUMMER TIMETABLE APPEARS by Ken Maylath and Jim Russell



For summer 1974 the people at NRPC gave us a different version of a Northeast Timetable (photo at left). Form B is now called "Northeast Schedules," as opposed to "East Coast Schedules" in recent timetable releases. The revised format includes, aside from the Northeast Corridor, Washington-Cumberland, Philadelphia-Harrisburg, New York-Buffalo, and Washington-Montreal. Gone from this form are such train listings as the BROADWAY and the Florida Service. Smaller forms are available for some individual routes as well. Connecting service is not shown.

Form B was ready on time--indeed a couple days before the changeover in the East. Not so with the National Schedules, however, and there were rumors that the nationwide timetable would not appear until June. The outdated April 10 issue is still being handed out.

The theme color for form B this time is green. The form has been seen in two versions: one with newsprint pages inside and one with all slick paper, apparently due to the paper shortage. There are no other differences between the two. The timetable carries several blurbs on Expo '74.

Aside from the schedules themselves, a big item relative to Northeast service concerns food. Until now few Corridor trains have been blessed with more than a small snack bar. Now few have such limited service--especially the Boston-DC thru runs. A spot check on May 19 showed that indeed the upgraded food facilities were there "as advertised." In some cases they are renovated cars in the 3300 series. A couple started running last fall on corridor trains. Tables run almost the length of the car, with a small serving counter at one end. Passengers are seated for meals. These cars can serve airline-style meals as well as standard snack fare. Other trains now boast regular dining cars. Even a couple weekend-only trains NY-Boston are dining-car equipped. The SOUTHERN CRESCENT is one train with a diner again (it had one under Amtrak for a time, but was dropped.) So, thru passengers no longer must finish breakfast by arrival time in Washington, around 8am, or wait for dinner until after 7pm southbound.

Schedule changes: none between New York & Buffalo. A minimal adjustment Washington-Cumberland with Hancock, MD added as weekday stop. Minor adjustments on Springfield line, due mostly to time changes for connecting NY-Boston runs at New Haven. The BAY STATE gets an extra stop at Thompsonville, CT.

The MONTREALER is considerably speeded up, as reported here before, while several runs have been lengthened. The speeding is thanks to improvements on the B&M between Springfield & White River Jct. It's 20min faster southbd and 45min northbd. The southbd run is also aided by a reduction in NY layover time from 60 to 25 minutes.

Philadelphia-Harrisburg Silverliner service stays the same, but there are adjustments to thru trains in that corridor. As noted here earlier, the NATIONAL LIMITED is more than 2hrs later eastbound--leaving Harrisburg 1pm and due in NY 4:35. Westbound it's 10min later now. The new weekend VALLEY FORGE run leaves Harrisburg at 8:30am Saturdays, pauses in NY from 11:55 to 12:10, and arrives Boston at 4:50pm. Return trip Sundays pulls out of Boston 1:30pm, stops in NY 6:15-6:35 and reaches Harrisburg at 9:55 (until mid-September).

The basic pattern and frequency of service in the Corridor remains the same. Metroliners are status quo. Most southbound trains from Boston depart 10 min earlier--on the hour--largely to accommodate additional stops. Kingston and Westerly, RI get more service, and Mystic, CT is now served by a couple trains each way. Quite a few more stops appear between New Haven and New York as well. Extra trains (some noted here earlier) are oriented to weekends, thru Mid-September. A new Sunday run, the KNICKERBOCKER, leaves Boston 7pm, arriving New York 11:35. A new Friday & Sunday run, the BOSTONIAN, leaves New York 6:10pm and gets into Boston at 10:40. The YANKEE CLIPPER TURBO now leaves New York at 6:40 instead of 6:30. Fridays only the MAYFLOWER runs from Washington to Boston, departing 5min behind the MONTREALER, at 5:10pm. After a pause in N.Y. from 9:05 to 9:30, it reaches Boston at 2:05am.

The addition of the NIGHT OWL and NATIONAL LTD to the ranks of reserved-only trains will probably lead to some passenger irritation. While the OWL is plainly labeled as reserved in Form B, the NATIONAL shows up in the Corridor and Harrisburg schedules with no such notation. It <u>is</u> listed as reserved in the Phila.-Harrisburg table published by the PC.

EDITORIAL

Two important and revealing documents concerning Amtrak have appeared this month: one is the Fortune Magazine article, "Amtrak is About to Miss the Train," by Rush Loving, Jr. The other is the transcript of Transportation Secretary Claude Brinegar's remarks to the National Press Club (see pp. 10-13). What they reveal comes as no surprise, but their clear, succinct messages come at a critical turning point for American rail passenger service, and stimulate us to present our own position clearly and emphatically.

The rift between Congress and the Administration over the direction Amtrak should take is well known. The DOT would like to hold passenger service to just the Northeast Corridor, while Congress responds to the people's demonstrated desire for an enlarged, modern rail transportation system. Secretary Brinegar himself asked for more public discussion of what "is being done to Amtrak," and we second the motion. However, we do not feel, as Brinegar does, that Amtrak is being "politicized." Those who support Amtrak are responding simply to the nation's transportation needs. We try to keep RTN a non-political publication, for we are acutely aware that our readers represent every possible shade of political opinion. The one factor that unites them all is their liking of trains and their desire for better train service. Amtrak is not by and large a political issue with support confined to one or the other party. Amtrak represents simply a means of providing a vital transportation service, but it appears that Secretary Brinegar does not understand that the function of government is to provide services that the people need and want and cannot provide on their own. Instead, the Secretary seems ready to further other ends by relying upon simplistic notions and scarey catchwords like "the taxpayer's money" and "destroying free enterprise" and "evils of nationalization." Why should the Secretary be "terrified" at the thought of nationalization? Is he also terrified at the thought of what can happen to big companies like Penn Central under private management? No, nationalization is not the ogre--quality of management is. There can be bad or good management of a nationalized system, there can be bad or good management of a private system.

What dismays us is that the Secretary, wielding such power over our transportation system, should display such rigid thinking and lack of understanding of our transportation needs. How can one in his position, at this late date, still make the naive equation of rail, air and bus service (see quote, p. 11)? Fortune Magazine provides a clear retort to such an inept comparison: "Besides relieving airport and highway congestion, trains consume less fuel per passenger than automobiles or airplanes. They have become a near necessity for travelers who can't afford or fear to fly, can't drive long distances, or can't stand being cooped up in a bus." Different vehicles perform very different, needed functions, and it behooves a Secretary of Transportation to understand this vital, elementary distinction.

Our greatest transportation need is to rebuild our rail passenger system, and the DOT is making itself one of the biggest stumbling blocks to progress. Therefore, WE URGE THAT THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION TENDER HIS RESIGNATION in favor of someone who better understands the pressing travel needs of our nation.

At Amtrak, meanwhile, things are in bad shape. The Secretary defends Roger Lewis, saying he's "working hard" in a "difficult situation." But there's much evidence that Roger Lewis has been too closely following the Secretary's line, trying to keep Amtrak small, to the nation's detriment. Quote Fortune Magazine: "Amtrak's troubles are primarily a failure of management, and much of the responsibility can be laid upon Roger Lewis... Lewis could have bucked the parsimonious White House and taken his plight directly to a more sympathetic Congress. But he chose not to." And Congress and the Administration are to blame, too, the magazine says, for not agreeing on a direction for Amtrak, so that long-term planning could be made. But Amtrak "seems resolved on blowing this phenomenal opportunity" presented by the energy shortage, says Fortune, and the corporation "will go on wobbling down the track until its present managers, starting with Roger Lewis himself, are replaced by executives with the stuff to run a better railroad."

Rail passenger service is at a critical turning point. Congress will be looking at Amtrak's next yearly appropriation, and the Senate must confirm members of the newly reconstituted Amtrak board. It is time for Congress to exert pressure to steer Amtrak in the right direction. WE URGE THAT THE REPLACEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF AMTRAK BE MADE A KEY ISSUE IN CONGRESS. The selection of a new president who will pursue the rebuilding of our rail passenger system with greater vigor is vital to the future of our transportation system.

Train supporters are urged to write their Senators now. The address of all Senators is the same: Senate Office Building, Washington DC 20510.

Urban-Suburban Transit

BART HEAD RESIGNS

B. R. Stokes, general manager of the BART system, announced his resignation in a surprise move May 24, thereby resolving the impasse over BART funding which could not be resolved by a split board of directors. This seems to assure that BART will receive additional state financial aid. Legislators had demanded the removal of Stokes as a condition for further BART funding. Stokes will go on to a bigger job at the end of June as head of a new Washington organization, the American Public Transit Association, a lobbying group for mass transit systems. A proposition on the June 4 ballot will decide whether BART's board becomes elective next November.

CHICAGO ELEVATED CRASH

A southbound CTA train crashed into the rear of another, stationary train on Chicago's elevated tracks in the evening rush hour of May 10, near 29th and State Sts. About 225 of approximately 600 passengers aboard received minor injuries. The stationary train had made an emergency stop, for reasons unknown at the time, and the second train hit its rear without slowing down.

JERSEY CENTRAL EXTENDS ITS COMMUTER SERVICE

In what was described as the single most important move by Central Railroad of New Jersey for the state's riders, the railroad extended its commuter service to Phillipsburg, effective May 20. This spring the CNJ is celebrating its 125th year of continuous service under the same name.

THE GREAT BICYCLE-TRAIN RACE

The dramatize the slow pace of the C&NW's Chicago-Lake Geneva commuter trains, a group of bicyclists raced a train the 20 miles between McHenry and Lake Geneva on May 7, beating the train by 12 minutes. A 15mph speed limit is set on the tracks because of their condition, and the road says it can't afford repairs.

canadian news letter (continued from page 5)

"DECLINE IN MAINTENANCE" of Canadian National's and CP Rail's lines thru the Fraser River Canyon in British Columbia is "criminal" and "can be documented," Mark Rose (NDP-Fraser Valley West) told the Commons April 25. He demanded the Canadian Transport Commission force the railways to improve the lines, pointing to two deaths the previous month.

A FINANCING BILL in the amount of about $460 million for CN Railways and Air Canada was signed into law April 25. The money covers the period of January 1973-June 1974.

ALASKA MARINE HIGHWAYS has announced it will keep the foreign-built ferry Wickersham in service thru June to prevent cancellation of reservations because of late delivery of the new 419-foot ferry Columbia. The Wickersham has been sold to Greek interests. Even with the extra trips, some 2000 of the 5000 reservations involved will still be cancelled. Travelers in Canada and Alaska this year should be advised that early reservations are essential.

OFFSETTING INCREASED COSTS of diesel fuel, Canadian Pacific has applied to the Canadian Transport Commission for permission to add a diesel-fuel surcharge on intercity passenger fares and Montreal commuter services--7% on intercity and 3% on commuter (on fares only, not on sleeping accommodations). This was to take effect May 23.

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION is reported interested in a plan by a veteran band leader to pipe music into the Toronto subway system. The system's installation would cost $100,000 and yearly operation $60,000.

BRITISH COLUMBIA RAILWAY'S new tunnel at Horseshoe Bay, about ½-mile long, has been opened, shortened the line between North Vancouver & Squamish. Track on the old loop between West Bay & Horseshoe Bay is being removed except for a short section above the Horseshoe Bay ferry terminal, which is being retained to store work equipment. The new tunnel cuts across a "gooseneck" in the line, and will shorten the running time of BCR's RDC cars on the North Vancouver-Prince George run.

STRIKING FIREFIGHTERS AT many Canadian airports helped boost transcontinental rail loadings in April. CP Rail added two sleepers to the CANADIAN, one Montreal-Vancouver and one Vancouver-Calgary; and CN added sleepers to its SUPER CONTINENTAL runs. The strike lasted 3 weeks and ended the last weekend of April.

FEDERAL TRANSPORT MINISTER Jean Marchand has been getting lots of publicity following his charges that the Canadian transport policy is "wrong," and that one move to correct matters would be to nationalize Canadian Pacific. Marchand said that the assumption of the 1960's that competition would work is not proving to be the case because too much of Canada is too undeveloped for competition to flourish. Marchand said the whole question of railway subsidies will be reopened--including a look at the passenger subsidy. Under the 80% subsidy of passenger losses, the railways received $81.8 million in 1972, up to $125.5 million in 1973, and still increasing.

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT has announced it will pick up half the Toronto transit system deficit as long as fares on the system remain unchanged. This ups provincial aid from $11.8 million to $22.6 million annually. While greatly easing the system's budget crunch, the plan kills hope for reduced fares for college students, war veterans and welfare recipients. The freeze could last 10 years. Ontario already pays 75% of the cost of new city transit vehicles.

B.C. HIGHWAYS MINISTER Graham Lea has announced that while Americans would not be excluded from traveling on the ferry "Queen of Prince Rupert" between Kelsey Bay & Prince Rupert, B.C., Canadians may be given first priority on the popular run. Prince Rupert residents have been complaining they can't obtain reservations on the 20-hour trip because of heavy bookings by tourists. The B.C. Ferry system extensively advertises this run in the U.S.

mixed train of thoughts

THE SLEEPING CARS Amtrak has obtained from CP Rail are being leased, we have learned, and a spokesman says they are to be returned to Canadian Pacific in time to meet the peak summer travel period in Canada, tho where that will leave Amtrak we can only guess. Twelve "Chateau" series sleepers are involved. CP can't sell any without the approval of the CTC..... AMTRAK RECENTLY TOLD Railway Age magazine that its Turbo-Trains consume more fuel oil per passenger mile than similar runs operated with diesels. However, Amtrak said, the Turbos are still viable for shorter corridor runs because their higher reliability makes the higher fuel consumption worthwhile..... THE SAN JOAQUIN lost its hot food service about the time of the summer changeover. It still carries a lunch counter car, but only cold food is served, since Amtrak thinks it can economize by dropping one cook. You will recall that even the SAN JOAQUIN DAYLIGHT under SP served <u>hot</u> food in its automat cars, bad as it was..... THE DOME LOUNGES on the SAN FRANCISCO ZEPHYR are now running only between Denver & Oakland, to allow one to appear on each consist. Lounge space for the Denver-Chicago segment is provided in a car such as a "Lewis & Clark Travellers Rest" car. Slumbercoaches are running again Denver-Chicago. The SFZ began its changed schedule out of Chicago May 19 (now leaves 3:45pm) with no advance publicity..... THE FLORIDIAN DETOURED May 13-16 Chicago-Evansville-Nashville via C&EI (L&N). Passengers from Indianapolis and Louisville were bused to the train..... JOHN D. EHRLICHMAN, Nixon's former adviser on domestic affairs, didn't like trains, evidently. The L.A. Times this month published an article about his facetious correspondence with the train-loving young daughter of a Congressional aide. Said Ehrlichman, "You will be interested to know that the presidents of the Southern Pacific, Santa Fe, Seaboard, and Delaware & Lackawanna railroads were all here in my office to talk about the railroads. I told them they had a special friend out West, and they were interested to know about you." To put her on an Enemies List, no doubt..... CHICAGO TRANSIT AUTHORITY didn't cooperate adequately with DOT officials investigating the May 10 accident, reported William C. Harsh Jr. in the Chicago Sun-Times, quoting an FRA spokesman, "There appears to be a certain reluctance on the part of the CTA to have thefederal government investigate this accident"..... ACTRESS ELIZABETH TAYLOR, who is "deathly afraid" of flying, especially since her husband, Mike Todd, was killed in an air crash, was on a plane leaving Los Angeles May 5 when it malfunctioned and had to return. The actress had an hysterical fit, creating newspaper copy across the nation. Recent estimates are that 25 million Americans share her feelings.....

* * *

THE DEL MONTE, San Francisco-Monterey train discontinued May 1, 1971, will run again, say local reports, if Monterey sources can come up with $192,000 of estimated yearly $288,000 deficit. Figures are based on projected load of 40 passengers per trip. If it reached 85, the train would break even financially. Amtrak has assured supporters it will reinstate the famous train if local funds are available..... AMTRAK MAY BE faced with perennial money problems, but it could have a quarter million dollars for the asking if it would just bill the state of Illinois for its share of the cost of running the ILLINOIS ZEPHYR, STATE HOUSE, ILLINI, and BLACK HAWK for the Oct. 1973-March 1974 period, reports W.C. Harsh in Chicago Sun-Times..... STATE OF ILLINOIS should subsidize another train Chicago-Rockford over the BLACK HAWK route, the state Governor has proposed..... AMTRAK HAS PROMISED to restore all snack & beverage service on Chicago-Milwaukee trains, but has not set a date. The new 11:20am departure from Milwaukee is train 324 moved up from 10:20; ban on local riders on trains 7 & 8 means a loss of one corridor train there--a reduction from 7 to 6 daily trains..... CONSTRUCTION HAS NOT yet started on Amtrak's new electric locomotives from G.E. Is there some mechanical hangup?..... NEW ORLEANS PUBLIC Service has applied to raise its transit basic fares from 15¢ to 25¢. They are one of the lowest in the U.S. and their non-PCC streetcars the oldest in the country.....

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"Resolving the fundamental questions about whether Amtrak should be pared down to a small but profitable service, or subsidized on a grander scale, would help a lot. But that's not enough. President Nixon's nominations for Amtrak's new board of directors, which must be confirmed by the Senate, provide an ideal opportunity for Congress to take a fresh look at the company's internal management. There seems no way to escape it: Amtrak will go on wobbling down the track until its present managers, starting with Roger Lewis himself, are replaced by executives with the stuff to run a better railroad."

--Rush Loving Jr. in Fortune Magazine, May 1974

"I don't tell Graham about marketing or King about operations. I like to visualize myself as the leader of the orchestra. My idea is to make music out of pandemonium."

--Amtrak president Roger Lewis, quoted in Fortune Magazine, May 1974

AMTRAK SDP40F's arrived in Washington DC for the first time on train 82, the SILVER STAR, on May 15. Two units were used instead of the usual 3 malfunctioning E units. An SCL engineer reported the powerful new engines maintained full speed with the throttle in only the #3 notch most of the time..... Proposed location of a new Amtrak depot for Charleston, WV is in Kanawha City, about 5 miles east of the present C&O/Amtrak depot in South Charleston. Amtrak has already announced the construction of a new depot in Russell, KY, replacing the C&O depot in Ashland, KY, and allowing removal of passenger-only line thru Ashland..... Amtrak has supplemented the single coach of trains 98-99, the Charlottesville-Newport News connection of the JAMES WHITCOMB RILEY, with a refurbished baggage-lounge, formerly B&O 1351..... Southern Railway is preparing for elimination of passenger trains in 1975: it raised the fares on its slow mixed trains in November and again in April. Trains 5-6-7-8 are restricted to piggyback train speeds and make stops at freight yards for switching at points such as Van Dorn St. piggyback terminal south of Alexandria, VA..... Amtrak employees can purchase the recent book about rail passenger service, The Way to Go, by McCleery and Southerland, at a 30% discount ($6.95 postpaid) from Simon & Schuster, Box AMT, 630 Fifth Ave., New York NY 10020..... Passenger stations on the SCL between Richmond, VA and Florida have been equipped with signs reading "Amtrak Rail Passenger Station"..... Did it take the ticket seller a long time to figure your fare? It's because, since April 16, Amtrak ticket sellers have had to add 5% to each portion (route, passage, room charge) of a fare using a conversion table. It's an old railroad method of avoiding issuance of a current tariff, hang the cost of passenger and employee frustration at the ticket counter... The PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL has suffered a slight downgrading with removal of its regularly-assigned "Travellers Rest" car. Replacemtn is 9800 "Silver Garden", a coach-buffet built for KANSAS CITY ZEPHYR. "Long" half of car has coach seating, with only the "short" end behind the dome available for services. The P.I. now has two domes in its 4-car lineup.....

Boston Elevated Johnson Type D Fareboxes $45, G.E. PC-5 controller $50, M&B St Ry, International Dual-window Fare Clock $30, Guides, 1960's, other railroad/Trolley items, write: K. T. Farrell, 28 Woods Avenue, Somerville MA 02144

Baxter Ward, the TV newscaster who helped little people, monitored LA smog, didn't beat Sam Yorty, but did something bigger: he beat an incumbent LA County Supervisor and on campaign contributions not exceeding $45! Southern Pacific is aware of Baxter Ward - Baxter wants Commuter Trains - at relatively low cost! So they threw him a busway - and he insisted on the real thing! Now, as your next Governor of California-- He's honest, fair, a gentleman. He refreshes. -Swan

Express Ads

AMERICA DISCOVERS AMTRAK! If our travel professionals are unable to secure space aboard a filled train, and alternate transportation must be found, count on our full service travel agency for expert assistance. Prudential-Grace Line's fine ships, for example, ply the Coast route connecting Los Angeles-San Francisco-Seattle-Vancouver. Or if flying is desired, all arrangements will be discreetly handled. Tickets may be purchased on approved credit cards and mailed directly to you. Our service costs you nothing--and may even save you money. Call us at 398-2994, or write GREAT WESTERN TOURS, 639 Market St., San Francisco 94105.

AMTRAK AUTHORIZED AGENTS CAN HELP obtain your reservations for ALL rail travel. No need for you to hang on the telephone for hours when we will do it for you and then mail tickets to you. Make your summer travel plans and RESERVE NOW! Let's Travel Tours, P O Box 146, 501 South D St., Perris, CA 92370. (714)657-4785.

FANTASTIC PUBLIC TIMETABLE BARGAINS. Over 100 grab bags sold so far to delighted collectors. $13 worth of timetables only $6.00, $30 worth only $13. Early to late 60's, nice variety, condition excellent. Also sell those amazing clear plastic slip covers for public timetables. Only 6¢ each. Tom Coval, 21 E. Robin Rd., Holland PA 18966.

Railroad Uniform buttons 50¢ each postpaid. Denver Tramway Co., Union Pacific, Chicago Great Western, Grand Trunk, Pennsylvania Reading Seashore Lines, Nickel Plate, South Shore Line, North Shore Line, Norfolk and Western, Central of Georgia, Lehigh Valley and Seaboard. J. Lajoie, 22 Stevens, Methuen, Mass. 01844.

QUALITY B&W NEGATIVES: 35mm, 2¼x2¼, 616 negatives of many major lines, shortlines and industrials. All negs fine-grain processed. Cabs, switchers & pass. units. PC, SOU, NW, SP, BN, FP&E, D&R, GN&A, MRR, P&LE, WM, B&O, C&O, EL, L&S, E&M, KCS, P&S, C&I, etc. List & sample 50¢. T.N. Colbert, 1008 Englewood, Parma, OH 44134.

Concerned Ohio citizens are working for improved passenger train service. Vital and innovative plans can become reality with organized support. Let's hear it for passenger trains in Ohio! Annual Membership $5.00. Ohio Association of Railroad Passengers, Box 653, Xenia, Ohio 45385.

INDEPENDENCE LIMITED TO RUN AGAIN! Thursday July 4, 1974, Cincinnati to Williamson W.Va.--July 5 Williamson to Roanoke Va. via Princeton and former Vgn. Ry.--July 6 Round trip out of Roanoke on Shenandoah Valley Route--July 7 Roanoke to Washington. Write R.N.R.H., PO Box 681, Roanoke, VA 24004 for information.

TUBBY THE TURBO button is the latest answer to that surly conductor or windbag Amtrak exec you encounter in your train travels. While appearing to be a normal Turbo button, Tubby actually contains a hidden orifice thru which a steady stream of water or other liquid will spray as you squeeze an unseen bulb. Makes your reply more effective than mere words. Dealer franchises now available.

RTN'S BOOK FIND of the month: "The Early Sunset Magazine 1898-1928" is a California Historical Society Anthology from Sunset including the years it was published by Southern Pacific. Contains a few rail items, lots of Californiana. 240 pages 7x10 softbound; $4.95 plus 25¢ postage. Calif. orders please add tax. Message Media, Book Dept., PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

ADVERTISING RATES FOR RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER. Express Ads cost just 25¢ per line for line of 80 typewriter characters & spaces, with $1.00 minimum. Please send remittance with order. Display ads cost $15 per page (5x8"); $7.50 half page; or $3.75 quarter page. Send remittance with orders under $15 to Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.